11: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

Men's Societies

575 182 [625] [561] [689] [684] [571] In the buffalo period, these age-graded organizations were the chief agents of tribal discipline.[186] They maintained order in the camp and on the march; they policed the communal hunts; they destroyed the tipi of anyone who pursued the game before the word was given; they publicly ravaged and, at times, killed the unfaithful wife or promiscuous sister of a fellow-member if he so requested. And probably as a corollary to these significant functions, the men's organizations, within their respective age-grades, developed a solidarity that was in striking contrast to the general brittleness of Blood relationships.

572 608 [178] [836] [601] One tie in Blood society is sacred—the tie between a man and his *taka*, his special friend. The choice of a boon companion is made in childhood; it is upheld throughout life. It is determined by age, by propinquity, and social position. In the past, *taka* shared the trials of hunt and war and a woman's favors before marriage. Today of necessity the last alone remains a test of friendship, but *taka* still use each other's kinship terms: the mother of one becomes the mother of the other, the sister of one, the sister of the other, and they assume the responsibilities implied in these and similar relationships.

575 572 561 Within the men's societies, alternate grades know each other as "fighters," but those who are members at the same time call each other *taka*. The term bespeaks the mutual loyalty expected of them. As a group they buy into a society; as a group they sell out. Wissler writes, "this companionship feature seems one of the fundamental conceptions in the Blackfoot scheme."[187]

575 182 178 [561] [796] But while the members or *taka* preserve a solid front within their age-grade, the societies themselves retain little of their former importance. There are no more communal hunts; there are no more protected marches. Only at the Sun Dance, when the bands gather to raise the sun pole and make their transfers do the societies operate as of old. For the rest, they function as social and ceremonial entities, interested primarily in feasting and exchange.

575 [162] In 1939, a sampling of 305 adult males (practically the entire adult male population) showed that, at some time, 205 had been members of the Pigeons, 189 of the Brave Dogs, 68 of the Braves, 23 of the Black Seizers, 25 of the Crow Carriers, 4 of the Crazy Dogs, 130 of the Horns, 1 of the

[186] For a full discussion of these societies, see Wissler, *Blackfoot Societies*, pp. 365–460; for age grades and police power, pp. 365–70; for general pattern, p. 424 ff.
[187] *Ibid.*, p. 428.

over the place where the sickness was in a person. 755
Sometimes he left them there for a long time;
other times he burned them with the end of a
glowing stick, right down to the skin. He once 756
cured a half-dead (paralyzed) Chinese man in
this fashion. After Tough Bread's death, nobody
knew how to carry on his unique curing methods.
He had offered to teach Mokakin and to give him
all his doctoring things, but Mokakin was scared
because he hadn't yet had any dreams that gave
him the Power to doctor. Tough Bread was also a [793]
leader of Medicine ceremonies.

STRIPED WOLF MEETS A FORMER ENEMY

As a young man, Striped Wolf took part in a few 721
of the last horse raids against enemy tribes. It is
said that his name came from a wolf that was [553]
seen on a hillside "striped" with many buffalo
trails. His brother was Dog Child.

Striped Wolf went on a raid toward Looks-like-a-Belly. On the way, he met a Gros Ventre coming toward the Blood camps for the same purpose. Both were at the head of their parties, and when they saw each other, they fired simultaneously. Both men went down, each thinking he had shot the other. Actually, they both took off and hid.

Later, Striped Wolf told the others about the man he shot and they all went to find the body. They looked all over but couldn't find it. The Gros Ventre did the same thing, but his party could find no trace either.

Many years later, there was a dance they 721
both attended. Both Striped Wolf and the Gros 608●
Ventre still remembered the time and place they
shot at each other. Somehow they found out
about each other at that dance. They took each
other for brothers and talked about what hap-
pened. It turned out that one of them had been
shot through the legging flap and the other

[p. 279-A]

through the edge of his shirt; neither had gotten hurt. 721 608

Now this is strange: one's name was Striped Wolf and the other's Striped Bird—just about [553] the same name. They exchanged names. They shook hands and kissed, and became like brothers. All the Gros Ventre's relatives gave Striped Wolf [431] a lot of presents—money, blankets, and other things. They remained good friends until they died.

THE HANGING OF CHARCOAL

Charcoal's days ended in 1897 at the age of thirty- 682 nine, on the gallows at Fort MacLeod. Before his death, Tsako, as our People nicknamed him, be- [551] came the most wanted man on Canada's western frontier.

Wilson wrote of Charcoal as a participant in 778 a Nighttime Ceremony and recorded that he had 425 owned a number of Medicines for which he sang songs: painted lodge and flag; painted lodge; Sioux sword for the Grass Dance; Horns Society; Mountain-Trim Tipi; Soldier's Society Pipe; Weasel-tail buckskin suits; Dogs Society; and bear knife. This [411] last sacred article was a huge dagger with a handle [237] made from a bear's jawbone. It was sought after and owned only by Powerful warriors. During the [796] transfer ceremony for this knife, the new Owner was forced to strip and roll on a bed of thorns. At [785] the end of the transfer the former Owner would hurl the sacred knife at the new Owner, who could have it if he survived and caught it.

Charcoal had two wives. One was faithful to 682 him, but the other, Pretty Wolverine Woman, was 837 fickle and wild. Although she had been married to Charcoal for about five years, everyone in camp [595] knew that she and a young man named Medicine Pipe Stem were lovers. They had been seen together while she went out after water. Charcoal's relative, Eagle Bear, had talked to her several times and warned her that her husband could punish her for her actions. Charcoal was known [411]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 28D-B]
[p. 279-B]